

HB 5080 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING DEER MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY AND AUTHORIZING BOW AND ARROW HUNTING ON PRIVATE PROPERTY SUNDAYS.

The Conservation Advisory Council is in **support** of this bill.

I am speaking on behalf of the Conservation Advisory Council. The Council consists of 25 members, who represent approximately 135,000 sportsmen throughout the state. These members belong to groups such as: United Bowhunters of CT, CT Audubon Society, CT Farm Bureau, Bristol Fish and Game, Rockville Fish and Game, CT Sportsman Alliance, Northwest CT Sportsmen, New London /Windham County League of Sportsmen Club, Fairfield County League of Sportsmen, CT Fish Advisory Council, CT Falconers Association, American Hunting Dog Club, CT Trappers Association, CT Woodcock Council, to name a few. As you can see, these groups have different interests at heart, but believe that conservation is important to the state's ecology.

This bill is supported by the DEEP as another deer management technique. The DEEP and its' biologists believe bow hunting on Sundays on private land, where 80% of the deer control happens, will help control the deer populations. They have studied deer populations in our state and how deer can change the ecology of an area.

The CT Audubon Society has seen their land trust areas demolished by deer eating the understory and bird nesting areas of their mature woodlands. Some of these areas are very important to our own survival.

Water supply regions, like Lake Gillard in Branford, attract large numbers of deer and need hunting to keep the ecological damage in check. The Regional Water Authority started bow hunting this region 5 years ago and have lowered the deer population 70%. The understory is now starting to rebound and sediment and debris no longer wash into this New Haven water supply.

The CT Farm Bureau has seen crops damaged by deer in the eastern region of the State. They have testified that they believe in wildlife control by hunting and trapping. Deer and beavers, (and developers), are the number one enemy of CT farms.

This bill will also benefit small businesses around the State. Sales by sporting goods stores, restaurants, motels, and others, will increase, as we expect not only CT bow hunters to be afield but also an increase in non-resident hunters.

It is important to understand what the passage of this bill will do. This bill will only impact those who wish to be impacted. This bill does not affect State Land or its use. This bill will only allow bow hunting on private land with written permission given to the hunter by the Landowner. The Landowner can still refuse to give permission to hunt on Sunday. This bill does not administer more tags for deer harvest. This bill only provides more opportunity, 16 Sundays to be exact, for archery hunters to be successful. This exact bill has been passed by this committee 3 years in a row. I ask that you pass this bill again, move it from this committee to the legislative floor. Let the people of the State, who you all represent, decide if this bill is right for the State.

Mike Ose CAC Chairman, Rockville Fish and Game member, Bow hunter